



Qualitative Sociology Review

Volume III, Issue 2 – August 2007

<https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8077.3.2.01>

Lukas T. Marciniak
Lodz University, Poland

Editorial introduction

Do we have to learn about yesterday's people if we want to understand today's social phenomena? Are classical scientific works still valid and useful for current investigations? Is there anything interesting for contemporary scientists in ancient scholarship or is the evolution of old theories and methods possible? We believe that you will find the answers to the above and to other questions in this issue of our journal.

We start with Robert Prus's article and get to know how he applies symbolic interactionism as a device for developing transhistorical comparisons, examining Aristotle's works and establishing links between ancient Greeks' scholarship and the contemporary social sciences.

Applications of the symbolic interactionism and other classical qualitative conceptualizations is also presented in Tim Gawley's article. The author explores trust development process, compares findings with studies from different substantive fields and discusses implications of his work for future trust development studies.

Another successful combination of classical sociological works with new approach is at the basis of Frank Nutch's article. The author explores commercial whale watch cruises referring to past studies of the cooling out process but recognizing cooling out the mark not on a face-to-face basis but as a collectively organized anticipating process, what makes this work innovative.

In the article written by Allison L. Hurst, well known sociological issues like social mobility, inequality and class identity formation are investigated from a narrative perspective and through ethnographic research. This new approach to "old sociological problems" offers a chance to perceive individual attempts to navigate class cultural differences and to discover identity formation strategies of college students.

The methodological article by Richard C. Mitchell also offers a "new way" of applying past theoretical and methodological works. First, the author proposes empirical adoption of autopoietic systems theory. Second, Mitchell argues for "grounded systemic approach," a combination of grounded theory methodology with systems theory, as an evolution of method and its application.

Another two articles are significant analyses of macro-scale changes, relatively new phenomena and events in contemporary societies.

The article written by Niels Åkerstrøm Andersen is a semantic examination of a social policy practice and some new kinds of active citizenship – citizens' contracts. The author precisely describes historical context of the phenomenon, identifies the present situation and the consequences.

The article written by Ellu Saar and Margarita Kazjulja presents relationship between structural changes and individual life courses. The authors analyze the

situation of people experiencing socio-economic transformation and reconstruct cumulative advantage and disadvantage patterns in their biographies.

The last three articles are very interesting examples of qualitative studies focused on new media and pop-culture phenomena.

The examination of popular Hollywood movies is presented by Wendy Leo Moore and Jennifer L. Pierce in their article. The authors conducted a narrative and frame analysis of the films to discuss important issues of race, racism and gender to identify movies in the so called anti-racist white male hero genre and to highlight their ideological implications.

The article written by Barbara Adkins and Eryn Grant is a study of online interactions and an internet backpackers' notice board. The study illustrates the importance of information and communication technologies in developing group solidarity and the way of constructing culturally shared understanding of the category "backpacker".

Finally, Harri Sarpavaara's article demonstrates an analysis of television advertisements. Using the dichotomy of the Dionysian and Apollonian philosophies derived from ancient Greek culture, the author examines the existence of the Dionysian impulse in today's advertising culture.

Beginning with an emphasis on ancient Greek contributions to current scholarship and ending with the study influenced by ancient Greek mythology, this issue of *Qualitative Sociology Review* aims to present the past as a useful resource of data, concepts and ideas; the present as a basis for comparative analysis and innovative development of theories and methods; and the future which should orientate our activity. All these and many other, interesting problems are to be found in an extensive interview with Robert Prus, which perfectly completes the issue. Thanks to Steven Kleinknecht who interviewed Professor Prus and has edited and rearranged the material to foster flow and clarity for the reader, we have an unusual opportunity to become familiar with Prus' thoughts on the discipline. Reading about the academic career of the distinguished interactionist ethnographer, his reflections on sociological theory and method and his approach to understanding the social world, we can learn a lot about every aspect of practicing qualitative sociology.